

STRUTHIO RHEA.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Rostrum subconicum, depressum.

Nares ovatæ.

Alæ ad volandum ineptæ.

Pedes cursorii.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS.

STRUTHIO pedibus tridactylis.

Ab exemplari pulcherrimo Americano, in Museum Leverianum nuperrime illato nunc primum depingitur avis exoticarum fere omnium rarissima, quamque probabile est non modo non vidisse Europæos physicos, sed pene ignorasse. Struthioni licet communi seu Africano primo intuitu simillima sit Rhea, alarum tamen pennæ, utcunque ad volandum inutiles, non modo longe majores sunt, sed et laxæ et quasi divaricatæ; et utrinque super axillas exstat fasciculus plumosus elongatus, torquem efficiens, quali propemodum distinguitur cervix Tetraonis Umbelli. Facillime vero speciem denotat, Linnæoque pro charactere specifico inserviit pedum forma, qui tridactyli sunt, digitis

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omnibus

omnibus antrorsum spectantibus, unguatis, et æquali fere magnitudine; cum habeat pes Struthionis communis duos digitos, quorum major tantum unguibus instruitur. Color Rheæ, in hoc saltem specimine, est terreo-fuscus, subtus pallidior, pennis alarum intermediis seu interioribus albis. Cauda vix discerni potest; in uropigio tamen paulo productiores sunt pennæ quam in reliquo corpore. Crura pedesque nigricant.

Notandum est in America tantum Australi reperiri hanc speciem, et pullum forsitan fuisse avem quæ in Museo Leveriano asservatur; est enim Struthione Africano dimidio minor.



THE
AMERICAN OSTRICH,



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Bill depressed, rounded at the end.

Wings useless for flight.

Legs naked above the knee.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER.

OSTRICH with three-toed feet.

The *Struthio Rhea*, or American Ostrich, one of the rarest of exotic birds, and which appears to have been hitherto almost unknown in Europe, and scarce ever seen by any European naturalist, and which most certainly has never before been figured, is here faithfully represented from a very fine specimen lately sent from America to the Leverian Museum. In its habit, or general appearance, this bird at first sight bears a near resemblance to the common or African Ostrich; but the wings, though useless for flight, are composed of feathers which greatly exceed those of the common ostrich: they are also looser, and more divaricated or

spread than in that species; and on each side the neck, just above the axillæ, is a fasciculus of long feathers, forming a sort of ruff, almost in the same manner as in the Tetrao Umbellus, or ruffed heathcock; but what easily distinguishes this species, and which LINNÆUS has made use of for his specific character of the bird, is, that the feet are not didactylous, or composed of two toes, as in the common or African species, but are tridactylous, or composed of three distinct toes; all which point forwards, and are nearly alike as to proportion: they are likewise all three furnished with claws; whereas in the common ostrich there are only two toes, of which the primary or large one alone is clawed. The colour of this bird (at least in the present specimen) is earthy-brown, paler beneath, and the intermediate or interior wing-feathers are white. There is scarce any appearance of a tail, but the feathers on the rump are a very little longer than in other parts. The legs and feet are blackish. I should observe, that this specimen is probably not a full-grown one, and is scarcely half the size of the common or African ostrich.